

Pleven's cabinet

If such highly important projects as the Schuman Plan and the rearmament of Germany were to go forward, France had to have a government. She had to have a government, too, if the politicians were ever to enjoy their long-deferred summer vacations. So it was that on August 11 France got a government—and an exceedingly good one. On that day, with only de Gaulists and Communists opposed, the Assembly approved, by a vote of 390 to 222, a cabinet headed by René Pleven, leader of the small, independent Democratic and Socialist Union of the Resistance. Like all his predecessors, Premier Pleven was unable to resolve the two big disputes which constantly threatened the life of the "Third Force" regimes under the old Assembly and have so far prevented anything remotely resembling unity in the new one. The two big issues are aid to Catholic schools and higher wages for industrial workers. The anti-clerical Socialists and Radical Socialists still refuse to give a sou of state aid to Catholic schools, which the Popular Republicans strongly favor. And the Popular Republicans and Socialists still scandalize the bourgeois souls of the Radical Socialists by insisting that substandard wages are no answer to inflation. M. Pleven promised to do something about wages, but not enough to persuade the Socialists to enter his cabinet. The latter have agreed, however, not to vote against the Government—at least for the present. Just what M. Pleven promised to do for Catholic schools is not yet clear. Whatever it was, he promised enough to bring the Popular Republicans into his cabinet and not enough to force the Radical Socialists out. That's the kind of political finesse which even the most cynical Frenchman can admire. Since it doesn't make for permanence, however, the de Gaullists may be right in stigmatizing the Pleven Cabinet as a "vacation government" which will go out with the last rose of summer. Before it fades, it will do some constructive work, especially in rearmament and foreign policy. This is assured by the presence of stalwarts like Robert Schuman, Georges Bidault and René Mayer.

Another headache for Britain

On August 6 Salah ed Din Pasha, Egyptian Foreign Minister, brought to a new climax his country's six-year struggle to rid Egypt of British troops. According to the terms of the Anglo-Egyptian treaty of 1936 the troops are there for the protection of the Suez Canal zone. Obviously influenced by the success of Iran's Premier Mossadegh in the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute, Salah ed Din announced before the Egyptian Parliament that the treaty would be abrogated before the end of the year. Thus, though Britain should succeed in bringing the current Iranian oil negotiations to a satisfactory conclusion, she will be faced with a still more annoying Middle Eastern headache. The Suez Canal is essential to the defense of the Middle East. Why, in the face of her military weakness, should Egypt reject not merely British protection but also any alliance involving the continued presence of foreign troops on her soil? The

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sole reason seems to be a misguided pride, born of past resentments and of the wave of exuberant nationalism rolling over the old colonial world. For her part, Britain is showing some disposition to admit the new facts of life in the Middle East. (Some months ago she agreed to include Turkey in NATO, on condition that Turkey also associate herself with the defense structure of the Middle East.) Though she cannot very well pull out of Egypt (the whole defense of the Middle East is concentrated in the Suez Canal zone), Britain is ready to accept modifications of the 1936 treaty which will soothe Egyptian pride without endangering the security of this critical area. If Cairo consults its own best interest, it will investigate the possibility of a compromise which Britain is offering.

Economy bloc falters

Though at the date of writing Congress has sent only a single regular appropriation bill to the White House, it is already clear that all the brave proposals to lop anywhere from \$4 to \$9 billion from the President's budget have pretty well gone up in smoke. So far, the House has passed ten appropriation bills, including the bulging \$56-billion Defense Department money bill. Mr. Truman's requests for the ten bills came to \$73.5 billion. As approved by the House, the bills total \$70.6 billion—or a cut of \$2.9 billion. Over on the Senate side, the "economy bloc" has had even less success. Up till now the Senate has passed seven spending bills for a total appropriation of \$13 billion. This amounts to a saving of \$965 million, since the original budget estimates called for \$13.965 billion. Moreover, if the Senate approves the action taken by its appropriation committee on the rivers and harbors bill, it will cancel a sizable part of the savings made in the House. The House cut a healthy \$126,210,444 from the President's request of \$650,637,843. Then the Kansas-Missouri floods struck and the Senate Appropriations Committee promptly restored all except \$3,394,630 of the House's excision. From the record so far, it would seem either that the economy bloc is not nearly so strong or so numerous as its spokesmen intimate, or the President's original estimates really add up to a "tight" budget, as he said they did. At any rate, now that all hope of substantial reductions in Government spending is gone, congressional proponents of a balanced budget have no logical choice except to vote a stiffer tax bill than the \$7.2 billion measure passed by the House.

Tolerating intolerance

The genesis of *Democracy and the Churches*, reviewed by J. M. O'Neill on p. 502 of this issue, was as follows. At the close of World War II, the Foreword by Dr. Henry Sloane Coffin discloses, "a small group of Church leaders met under the chairmanship of Dr. John R. Mott to discuss certain matters which were troubling many regarding the relationship of the Churches to political and social freedom." It was determined that a "competent historian" would be commissioned to prepare a book "on the attitudes of the various communions toward democracy." Dr. James H. Nichols, Associate Professor of Church History in the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago, was the "first choice" for the task. Mr. O'Neill's review makes obvious the fact that the clergymen's choice of an author was very unfortunate. That may have been simply an error of judgment. But if the author's grave misrepresentations of Catholicism—and of American history—are not repudiated by the committee that chose him, not all the protestations in the world that "the views expressed in this book . . . are those of the author, and not necessarily to be construed as the positions of the Federal Council [of the Churches of Christ in America], its committees, or of any one of its constituent Churches" will absolve the reverend gentlemen concerned from responsibility for countenancing and endorsing such open partisanship. This is all the more true because "the churchmen who were interested in the preparation of this volume were, in the course of time, organized as the Committee on Religious Tolerance, later related to the Federal Council." Any committee that can tolerate this book, even though it commissioned its writing, proclaims *ipso facto* its own religious intolerance. The National Council of Churches of Christ in the United States, successor to the Federal Council, could strike a real blow for tolerance by repudiating both the book and its author.

The plight of the Navajos

A conquered people, living in our midst, have never been given the chance to better themselves. In this land of plenty they are living in abject misery. People from other countries are given opportunities to make a decent living, while our "First Americans" are absolutely neglected and cast aside. "We have driven the Indian

into an abysmal pit of darkness and misery, and the very least we can do is lower the ladder of opportunity to help him to climb back into the sunlight and know again the pride that was his." These somber words are taken from a brief, illustrated pamphlet entitled *The Navajo Problem, a Blot on Modern Civilization*, composed and issued gratis by no less an authority on the Indian's situation than the Rev. Bernard A. Cullen, director general of the Marquette League for Catholic Indian Missions (289 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.). The author's statements are based squarely upon material contained in the *Congressional Record*. Father Cullen reminds us that fifty per cent of all Navajo children receive no formal education whatsoever, and that health conditions on the reservation are indescribably bad. He reminds us also that the U. S. Interior Department slashed \$4.5 million from the \$12.5 million promised for the Navajo and Hopi rehabilitation program for this year, and cut only \$20,000 from "administration and salaries" of the U. S. Indian Bureau. A large part of the remaining \$8 million appropriated for the so-called rehabilitation program is being spent for administration and salaries. "When we fight for funds for the Indians and when they are appropriated, they are used up by the employment of white help." These are a few of the conditions our Catholic missionaries to the Indians are facing. There is plenty more to be told, and some of our many Catholic vacation tourists in the picturesque lands of the great Southwest would do well to learn at first hand something of the shameful reality of our treatment of the Navajos.

Feud between labor and agriculture

The Ohio project for promoting understanding between farmers and trade unionists, which is described elsewhere in this issue, has a much smaller chance of success than it had when Mr. Barmann sent us his article. The recent fight over the 1951 Defense Production Act, in which organized labor found itself opposed by an almost solid front of business and farm organizations, has damaged relations between agricultural and union leaders beyond any hope of immediate repair. Indicative of the reaction in labor circles to the farm lobby's open alliance with the National Association of Manufacturers and the U. S. Chamber of Commerce was the bitter resolution approved ten days ago at the quarterly meeting of the AFL executive council in Montreal. The resolution bluntly severed the AFL's hitherto existing friendly (at least on the surface) relations with the American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Grange, and openly foreshadowed labor opposition in Washington to the pet projects of the farm lobby. There was even an ominous reference to the farmers' tax-free cooperatives—an issue which, if raised by labor, might split the business-farm alliance wide open. Though the Ohio project was sponsored solely by the CIO, the AFL action at Montreal may have a withering effect on it. On the guilt of the big farm organizations in the anti-inflation struggle, the national CIO and AFL see eye to eye. Perhaps if the Ohio

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Editor-in-Chief: ROBERT C. HARTNETT
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Associate Editors: JOHN LAFARGE, BENJAMIN L. MASSE,
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Contributing Editors: WILFRID PARSONS, ROBERT A. GRAHAM,
ALLAN P. FARRELL

Editorial Office: 329 W. 108TH STREET, NEW YORK 25, N. Y.

Business Office: 70 EAST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

Business Manager and Treasurer: JOSEPH C. MULHERN

Circulation Manager: MR. ARTHUR E. CULLIN

Advertising Manager: MISS JANE VLYMEN

plan had been adopted earlier and practised more widely, the break between labor and agriculture might have been avoided. As it is now, our major economic groups, in their short-sighted pursuit of self-interest, have precipitated a power struggle that may be more than the country can stand.

POW's, a test of USSR's sincerity

The United Nations began on July 30 a belated investigation of the fate of prisoners of war still detained by Soviet Russia. There has been a lot of backing and filling on this subject, with charges scattered around like ill-aimed buckshot, but at last the UN is going to try to set the record straight and open it for all the world to see—six years after the end of war. What is the record as known or fairly suspected to date? Western Powers and the German Government agree that at least 400,000 Germans are still POW's. Japanese sources estimate that some 350,000 Japanese are still held. The Italian Foreign Minister claims that 63,000 Italians share the same fate. Prisoners of other nationalities would probably add up to another hundred thousand or so. The point of all this is not exactly the numbers involved—though a million men living in POW conditions in the USSR and satellite countries is a horror to contemplate. The point is that thus far the Soviets and their stooges have refused to submit data. Forty-five nations have thus far responded to the UN approaches, six of them admitting that they still retained POW's—Burma, the Philippines, Norway, Canada, Britain and Yugoslavia. But Russia has boycotted the investigation to the extent of complete silence, save for the charge that the commission is "illegal," and Poland has responded by alleging that the investigation is for "propaganda" purposes. This answer is obviously no answer whatsoever, since the committee is empowered to investigate POW's held by *all* countries. The UN inquiry will, of course, get exactly nowhere in a practical sense unless the USSR submits to inspection. But one result of this full-dress inquiry may well be to shatter the naïveté of those who harbor the hope that Russia is moving slightly toward a sense of fellowship with the free world. The POW's are a simple and obvious touchstone of Soviet sincerity. Until the Kremlin comes clean on this issue, any attention given the current Soviet propaganda drive for an understanding with the free nations is a sheer waste of time—and a dangerous waste of time at that.

Correction

In our July 28 issue we stated that "Rep. Leon H. Gavin (R., Penna.) broke a confidence on July 11 by revealing that we have in readiness only eighty-seven B-36's capable of carrying A-bombs 'anywhere in the world'" ("Naval and air bases in Spain," p. 409). In the House of Representatives on July 20 Mr. Gavin denied that he had given any such information. As a member of the Armed Services Committee, said Mr. Gavin, he had been approached on July 11 by a newspaperman, Frank Eleazer, who told Mr. Gavin that he

had learned the number of B-36's from another member of the Committee. Mr. Gavin told Mr. Eleazer that such information was highly secret and warned him twice that he should clear the matter with chairman of the Committee, Rep. Carl Vinson (D., Ga.). The statement that Mr. Gavin had disclosed the number of B-36's appeared in Robert S. Allen's syndicated column for July 16. Representative Gavin issued a denial of the story on July 18. (This just missed our press deadline for the July 28 issue.) On the same day, as appears from the *Congressional Record* (p. 8739), Mr. Gavin met Mr. Eleazer in the presence of Rep. Harman D. Denny Jr., (R., Penna.). In this interview, according to an affidavit sworn to by Representative Denny, Mr. Eleazer confirmed Representative Gavin's assertions 1) that he had not given Mr. Eleazer the information about the B-36's, 2) that he had twice warned the newspaperman that the information was secret and should be cleared with Representative Vinson. AMERICA regrets the attribution of this breach of confidence to Representative Gavin. It seems clear, however, that some member of Congress did not keep his lip sufficiently buttoned.

Play ball!

One readily understands that baseball umpires have no friends, except, possibly, other baseball umpires. Listening to the criticism freely voiced from the stands, one wonders how the umpires can get around without seeing-eye dogs. But even umpires get a break now and then. Such, for example as came to three American League umpires who presided over the Yankee-White Sox game in New York on July 27. With the Sox putting on a winning rally in the ninth, Yankee manager Casey Stengel cast an eye aloft to the lowering skies and embarked upon a masterly course of stalling until the rain came down, the game was stopped and the score went back to where it stood at the end of the eighth, Yankees 3-1. Frenzied Chicagoans, weeping with pure rage, denounced the umpires as "Yankee fans." The umpires, whose creed is "Call 'em fast and walk away tough," took the whole thing in their stride. But their day was coming. On Sunday, August 12, the same three umpires stood in Shibe Park, Philadelphia, and watched the Yanks lose the fruits of their eighth-inning rally as the Athletics stalled until the Sunday curfew stopped the game. Mr. Stengel, the sports pages announced the next day, had decided not to file a protest against the Athletics' tactics. Now this kind of disorderly and frustrating mix-up, so characteristic of a decadent bourgeois capitalistic society, cannot happen in the Soviet state. When the Dynamo football team from Moscow came to meet an East German team in Berlin on that same fateful August 12, the Dynamos were accompanied by their own umpire. This high-minded and incorruptible official stood for no nonsense about alleged foul play by the Dynamos, who licked the East Germans handsomely. The East Germans were given a free lesson in the doctrine that Moscow is always right. Rumors that the umpire's name was Malik are said to be without foundation.

WASHINGTON FRONT

Sen. George W. Malone, Nevada Republican, said the other day that blame for the Korean war and other iniquities of the Truman Administration cannot be exposed fully until the Republicans regain control over the congressional investigative machinery.

Maybe. But the last time the GOP controlled Senate and House investigating committees, in the Eightieth Congress from 1946 to 1948, they weren't able to do much with them. The Republicans had promised to scourge the Democrats with startling disclosures—there was a gag about "beginning every day with a prayer and ending it with a probe." Mostly, they just prayed. Senator Homer Ferguson flushed out some war scandals and helped propel Gen. Bennett Myers toward the jailhouse, but there weren't many shockers.

The fact is that Democrats themselves have turned up most of the dirt hereabouts on Democrats. The RFC influence-peddling, the stories of fine favors heaped on White House aides, the tie-in of Democratic politicians with the racketeers, the farrago of petty examples of lack of decent ethics in government—most of this has been developed in the last couple of years by committees supposedly controlled by the party in power.

There just wasn't any atmosphere of till-tapping or second-story work back in the Roosevelt days here, and that may be answer enough to why the Republicans of 1946-48 didn't come up with the investigative circuses they'd anticipated. Sure, there were costly bonehead plays in the war and there was waste—that is war. Put the men around Franklin Roosevelt, damned as they were by a thousand political enemies for trying to make America over, never were suspected of having their hands out. Political favoritism cut a figure then as in every administration, but nobody has yet brought to light any of the deep freeze-mink coat kind of chicanery.

Kefauver, Fulbright, O'Connor, Douglas, Hoey—all Democrats—these are the names of men whose investigating committees have scorched Truman & Co. There isn't any question that their findings have been damaging politically to the Democratic party. Their honest work has given the Republicans a 1952 campaign cry against government corruption. Some whose names have looked worst in all this have been associated fairly closely with President Truman himself or with his White House assistants. Even at the moment, the President has been forced to come to the aid of William M. Boyle Jr., Democratic national chairman, with a denial that this gentleman did anything improper in connection with some RFC loans.

Even in a day of dulled public consciousness toward wrongdoing in government, the disclosures since 1948 have caused a stir. They may be hard to gloss over next year.

CHARLES LUCEY

UNDERSCORINGS

A congress of Catholic theologians will be held at Rome, Oct. 27-Nov. 1, "to review and evaluate in a critical manner what Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox authors have written" about the dogma of the Assumption of Our Lady, proclaimed on Nov. 1, 1950 by Pius XII. The announcement of the congress was contained in an article in the Aug. 13 *Osservatore Romano* by Rev. Carlo Balic, O.F.M., Rector of the Athenaeum Antonianum, according to a dispatch to the New York Times by Camille M. Cianfarra.

► The second annual Cardinal Newman award will be presented this year by the Newman Club Federation to Clare Booth Luce, playwright and former U. S. Congresswoman from Connecticut. Rev. Paul E. Tuite, chaplain of the University of Rochester (N. Y.) Newman Club, announcing the award, said that it would be conferred by Most Rev. James E. Kearney, Bishop of Rochester, at the Federation's annual convention at Wentworth-by-the-Sea, N. H., on Sept. 8.

► Rev. John Courtney Murray, S.J., former associate editor of *AMERICA*, editor of *Theological Studies*, professor of theology at Woodstock College, Woodstock, Md., and a leading authority on Church-State relations, has been appointed visiting professor of medieval philosophy at Yale University, New Haven, Conn., for the coming scholastic year.

► Two handy little Queen's Work pamphlets are *How to Think about Race*, by Rev. Louis J. Twomey, S.J. (10c) and *Fifty Ways to Improve Race Relations*, by Frank A. Riley (5c). Address: 3115 S. Grand Blvd., St. Louis 18, Mo.

► Naval personnel and civilian talent from the U. S. Naval Airbase, Patuxent, Md., have been generously cooperating with the Rev. Bernard V. Cunningham, chaplain, and the Jesuit Fathers at Ridge, St. Mary's County, Md., in restoring St. Ignatius Church, on St. Inigoes Manor. The building was begun in 1785 and completed in 1788, and until fairly recent times served as a regular parish church. With disuse, dilapidation set in, injuring the attractive frescoes and fine colonial woodwork. With the restoration, the old brick church will become a place of pilgrimage, inspiring for its many historic associations.

► At the opening of the twenty-third World Zionist Congress in Jerusalem on Aug. 14, Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion declared that the State of Israel had "no authority over Jews resident in other countries." He also stated that the world Zionist movement should have no authority in shaping the political policy of Israel. Mr. Ben-Gurion took sharp issue on the latter point with the U. S. Zionist group headed by Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver of Cleveland, Ohio. The Prime Minister's position was supported by Louis Lipsky, chairman of the American Zionist Council. C. K.

Gromyko goes to San Francisco

Now that the Soviet Union has agreed to take part in the San Francisco conference on the Japanese peace treaty September 4-8, its latest peace offensive becomes less mysterious.

That peace offensive may be said to have begun on June 23, when Jacob Malik first hinted that peace might be possible in Korea and that thereafter Communists and non-Communists might "peacefully coexist." The conciliatory gestures that followed were climaxed by the publication within Russia of the message of British Foreign Secretary Morrison and President Truman's letter to Soviet President Shvernik enclosing the congressional resolution assuring the Russian people of American friendship.

While this momentary opening of the Iron Curtain aroused speculation among the Western allies, it did not raise any hopes, as it might have five years ago, that Russia had decided to let the rest of the world alone. While there was general agreement that the shift in tactics was designed to slow down Western rearmament, there was no consensus on what the Soviets' immediate objective might be.

Scarcely noticed at the time was Secretary Acheson's conjecture voiced at his press conference following the Truman-Shvernik exchange. He remarked, without further elaboration, that he considered the Soviet action to be the first in a series of propaganda moves aimed at sabotaging the San Francisco peace conference. His assumption may have seemed far-fetched at the time, but now that the Soviets have declared themselves in on the meeting, it might repay analyzing.

If our analysis appears complicated, it is because it deals with one of the most involved of all the Soviet schemes, the attempt to take over the whole Far East. A rearmed Japan, closely allied with the free nations, would present a major obstacle. Hence the Korean venture, which, if it had succeeded, would have neutralized Japan.

When aggression by proxy failed, Russia quickly launched the diplomatic drive we mentioned. We do not think we exaggerate Soviet deviousness when we say that the Kremlin's immediate objective has been to prepare the way for an all-out attack on the Japanese peace treaty, which provides for an independent and fully-armed Japan.

For two months the mighty Soviet propaganda machine has pounded out the theme that the Soviet Union is ready for peace, that it will welcome disarmament, and that it wants world-wide cooperation. Its four delegates to San Francisco, led by the master peacemaker, Andrei Gromyko, will march to this beguiling tune.

It is reported that the United States will fight any effort to introduce new topics or to make substantive changes in the treaty, on the ground that all parties concerned had a chance to offer revisions during the past year. The United States is expected to demand that the Communists be voted out of order if they try to change the rules of procedure or suggest discussion

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of an over-all Far Eastern peace settlement, including Korea. It is at this point that their greatest propaganda opportunity will come, and the greatest danger to the United States and its friends. By skillful promises to those who want more from the treaty, the Reds may win adherents.

We can only hope that our delegation is prepared. At times we have gotten the impression that the whole peace treaty project has been indecisively handled. The meeting, for example, has been officially called a "conference," and four days have been allotted to it. Yet the State Department has insisted that it was to be no more than a signing ceremony, and that the treaty as published August 15 would not be subject to change. The allowance of four days, presumably for speeches, may have been just what decided the Soviets to send their four agitators.

Be that as it may, we are about to witness the climax of the current Soviet peace offensive. It will take real statesmanship to prevent our losing not only the treaty but half the friends we have in Asia.

Surgery on Taft-Hartley

Three years ago Senator Taft was ready to admit that the law which bears his name and that of former Congressman Hartley needed an overhauling. At the time neither organized labor nor President Truman, flushed with an unexpected victory in the 1948 election, was willing to settle for anything less than outright repeal. The result was a legislative stalemate that has lasted up till now. Recent developments indicate that the unions, chastened by Senator Taft's resounding triumph last fall in the Ohio senatorial campaign, have finally decided that, the present prospect for repeal being nil, half a loaf is better than none. One of their best friends in Congress, Senator Hubert Humphrey (D., Minn.), has joined Senator Taft in sponsoring two bills aimed at excising from the Taft-Hartley Act two of its most stupid anti-union provisions.

The first of these is the requirement of an election as a condition for negotiating a union shop. The other is the application of representation elections to the building trades. It took only a few NLRB elections to convince practically everybody except Westbrook Pegler that American trade unionists prefer to work under union-shop conditions, and that to continue union-shop elections was nothing but a waste of taxpayers' money. The unions won practically all of them by overwhelming majorities. It was equally evident that representation elections are not practical in the construction industry, where operations are scattered and of relative

ly short duration, and where in the course of a year a worker may be employed by several different firms.

The bills sponsored by Senators Humphrey and Taft will put an end to this expensive nonsense. They will also validate retroactively all the union-shop clauses in existing contracts which were some time ago declared null and void by the National Labor Relations Board. The Board threw them out because they had been negotiated prior to December 22, 1949, when the international officers of the CIO finally capitulated and signed the Taft-Hartley anti-Communist affidavits. Both these bills have a good chance in the Senate and at least a fair chance in the House. There is really no need, as the sponsoring Senators affirm, for hearings, since the subject matter of the proposed legislation is familiar to almost all Congressmen.

While the Congress is reconsidering the Taft-Hartley Act, it might well take another look at the anti-Communist affidavit section. As we have pointed out before, there is a loophole in this section which permits Communists to take the oath with impunity. A man is merely obliged to swear that he is not here and now a member of the Communist party. He could resign from the party one day, sign the affidavit the next day, and the day after that rejoin the party. Chiefly for this reason the U. S. Department of Justice has hesitated to institute proceedings against any of a dozen or more union officials who have signed the affidavits, yet continue to follow every twist in the Communist party line. On June 30, Attorney General J. Howard McGrath called the attention of Congress to this weakness in the law and proposed a change in language that would close the loophole. To make such a change would take so little time and trouble that Congress has no excuse for deferring action on Mr. McGrath's request until next year. In plugging this loophole, it should also stipulate that employers as well as labor leaders must sign the non-Communist affidavits. That would remove a discrimination in the present law which labor rightly resents.

These changes will not make the Taft-Hartley Act a perfect law, or render it acceptable to organized labor. But they will make it a better law and one under which organized labor can more easily live.

The Chief Justice slips

When the U. S. Supreme Court on June 4 handed down its decision in *Dennis v. U. S.*, upholding the constitutionality of the Smith Act and sustaining the conviction of the eleven top men of the Communist party in this country, public attention was focused principally on the fact of the conviction and the issue of free speech involved.

One statement of Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson in his majority decision went for the moment unnoticed. Said Mr. Vinson:

Nothing is more certain in modern society than the principle that there are no absolutes, that a name, a phrase, a standard has meaning only when associated with the consideration which gave birth

to the nomenclature . . . To those who would paralyze our Government in the face of impending threat by encasing it in a semantic straitjacket we must reply that all concepts are relative.

In the June 18 *Barron's* Felix Morley took issue with these "superfluous assumptions" of the Chief Justice. "Our whole system of government," said Mr. Morley, "is based on the assumption that there are certain absolute values, referred to in the Declaration of Independence as 'the Laws of Nature and Nature's God'."

The *Christian Century* for July 11, approving Mr. Morley's stand, observed: "One might think that the use which Hitler and Stalin have made of the contention that 'there are no absolutes' and that 'all concepts are relative' would have warned the Court against employing such language."

By July 23 the controversy had reached the stage where *Time*, in its "Religion" department, could advert to the controversy between "Quaker Morley" and "the nation's No. 1 judge." In the August 13 issue of the weekly newsmagazine, readers were admitted to the debate via the correspondence columns.

Beyond a doubt, the bald statement that "in modern society . . . there are no absolutes" is, as a moral principle, erroneous. Murder is absolutely immoral. Robbery is absolutely immoral. Blasphemy, adultery, calumny and slander are absolutely immoral.

Our political life, too, is based on absolutes, the "self-evident" truths of the Declaration: that all men have certain inalienable rights; that "to secure these rights governments are instituted." The very "right of revolution" to which some appeal as a proof of the purely relative nature of political concepts is itself based on these absolutes. The right "to alter or abolish" a government comes into play only when a government "becomes destructive of these ends," i.e. the securing of man's inalienable human rights.

We are inclined to agree with Judge Desmond of the N. Y. Court of Appeals, who on July 11, in his concurring opinion in the *Zorach* released-time case, said: "I cannot believe that the Chief Justice of the United States, in his opinion for the Supreme Court majority in *Dennis v. U. S.*, meant literally what he wrote: 'that there are no absolutes' and that 'all concepts are relative'."

From the context of Mr. Vinson's dictum and from his reference to the *Douds* case (May 8, 1950), in which he also wrote the majority opinion, it is evident that he was concerned to show that the phrase "clear and present danger" has no fixed or immutable meaning, but must be interpreted in the light of the special circumstances of each case. Unfortunately he chose to embroider his exposition of this point with the quite uncalled-for remarks about absolutes that have caused so much stir.

Were such opinions voiced by anyone of smaller stature than the Chief Justice, speaking for the Supreme Court, we might be less uneasy. As it is, we think Mr. Vinson should seize the first possible occasion to recover this dangerous fumble.

The scandal of Cicero

William Gremley

THE TOWN OF CICERO, ILLINOIS, hardly needs an introduction to those who recall the bawdy 'twenties. For years it was headquarters for the Capone gang, the syndicate that ran organized vice and crime in the Chicago area. As such, the town itself wallowed in vice and corruption of every known kind. The name Capone became synonymous with Cicero and the town's reputation spread over the world.

Today, Cicero is synonymous with something else, and again the world is watching.

On June 8 of this year, Harvey Clark Jr., a bus driver for the Chicago Transit Authority, aged 29, married, with two children, prepared to move his furniture into an apartment he had rented at 6139 19th Court, Cicero. Much to his surprise he found a reception committee on the scene when he arrived with his wife in the moving van. The group included residents of the community and town police officials who informed him bluntly that he could not move in. He was told by the police to "get," and quickly. Observing the angry mood of the crowd, Clark decided on discretion. He ordered the van driver to return to Chicago.

There was nothing illegal about the renting of this apartment by Clark. It was under rent control, one of twenty apartments in the same building. He had dealt with a reputable real-estate agent. He had paid no bonus for the apartment. He is a citizen of good standing and character, an honorably discharged veteran with two brothers still in the Army, one in Korea. He is a college graduate, as is also his wife; and he has no criminal or police record. There was only one thing wrong with him, one thing to which the police and neighbors objected. Clark is a Negro. Negroes, they told him, could not live in Cicero.

By now most of the world knows what happened subsequently. Clark, with the aid of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, got a Federal injunction from District Judge John P. Barnes, an injunction to restrain the Cicero police from interfering with him and to give him protection when he did move in.

On the evening of the move-in day, Tuesday, July 10, a crowd gathered in front of the building. On Wednesday a mob, unhampered by the police, stormed Clark's third floor apartment, pillaged his and other apartments and threw Clark's furniture into the street, where it was burned. On Thursday the mob had developed into a raging, uncontrolled fury intent on demolishing the entire building, now completely evacuated by the nineteen other tenants. Only the arrival of the Illinois National Guard on Thursday night saved the communi-

Last month's race riot in Cicero, Ill., which had its repercussions as far away as Singapore, is here discussed by one who made a study of it at first hand. Mr. Gremley is a native of Chicago and a member of the Chicago Catholic Interracial Council. He is engaged in human-relations work. Mr. Gremley believes that what happened at Cicero poses a serious problem for the Catholic conscience.

ty from a complete and chaotic breakdown of law and order.

Also a matter of common knowledge is the failure of both Cicero and Cook County police to maintain order, and the open encouragement that in many instances police gave the rioters in their vandalism, an attitude which changed only when the rioters attacked guardsmen and police themselves.

The things that are not a matter of common knowledge should be matters of deep concern to every Catholic, for the shame that is again Cicero's belongs partly to the Catholic schools and churches of Cicero.

The particular area in which Clark desired to live is heavily Catholic. There are nine Catholic parishes in Cicero, two of which—St. Frances of Rome and Our Lady of the Mount—are located in or near the riot area. The first named includes the Clark building in its parish boundaries. In addition, two parishes—St. Mary of Celle and St. Odilo, in Berwyn, Illinois, the adjacent town to Cicero—border on the area of disturbance. The building itself is located on the Cicero side of Lombard Avenue, the dividing line between the two towns.

Population figures from the Chancery Office of the Chicago Archdiocese give a total of 28,217 Catholics out of the total Cicero population of 67,195. Of these 28,217 Catholics, 7,670 are residents in the two Cicero parishes mentioned. Another 7,030 live in the two Berwyn parishes, making a total of 14,700 Catholics in the vicinity of the violence. Although no breakdown of total population is available for this one area, community sources estimate that the 14,700 total represents from 70 to 80 per cent of the area's total population. Since the predominant ethnic groups in that area of Cicero—and Berwyn—are Czechoslovakian and Polish, traditionally Catholic in the Chicago area, it is probable that these estimates are fairly accurate. At any rate, in addition to figures indicating a predominantly Catholic community, other factors are available to confirm the same conclusion.

It is comparatively easy for an experienced observer mingling with mobs of this type to determine Catholic affiliations. Sweaters with school names or crests on the back, Knights of Columbus lapel pins and rings, scapular or other medals seen through an open shirt are some fairly definite physical symbols of Catholic faith. Small knots of people talking together can also give clues. References to some Catholic activity or school, to a person such as a priest or pastor—such indications of a Catholic milieu are a fairly safe sign that the speaker, and possibly those with him or her, are most likely Catholics.

On Thursday night, July 12, I arrived at the scene at 7:00 P. M. From then until 2:00 A. M. Friday I mingled with the mob at various points, observing countless incidents of violence and vandalism. I located myself at strategic points so that I obtained an excellent over-all coverage of the development of the mob throughout the evening. This, for the purpose of this record only, is what I saw and heard.

I noted numerous teen-agers of both sexes wearing sweaters marked with names like Fenwick, Campion, Nazareth—all Catholic high schools in the Chicago area. These youths were participating with others in senseless chantings, throwing of fire-crackers and rocks, boos and catcalls at the police, before the lines broke and the mob surged gradually along the long, open prairie facing the apartment building on the west. Periodically, many of these youths would voice extreme anti-Negro sentiments. At one time I stood next to a group of young teen-age girls, some with crosses around their necks, flippantly advising the police to go home because "Jiggers, look out, here come the niggers."

Later, after the mob had reached to within throwing distance of the building, teen-agers began to pelt the structure from all sides with rocks, half-bricks, fire-crackers, Roman candles. I stood to the side of a cleared area in front where boys and girls of twelve years old and up were breaking housebricks in half and collecting stones so that the older boys could throw them at the window. From the necks of many dangled scapular or other medals, seen through open shirts as they stepped forward to hurl the bricks and stones.

Most significant was a comment overheard from a man in his early twenties in a group of four or five watching the vandalism. The conversation seemed to relate to the question of Negroes attending a local Catholic church, for he remarked: "I don't want those jigs sitting in the same pew with *me*." He was answered by a girl of seventeen or so, who assured him that he had nothing to fear, that "those niggers don't join the Church anyhow."

These are only a few, the most striking perhaps, of numerous incidents witnessed throughout the night. They are not exceptions or isolated actions from which it would be unfair to draw conclusions. They were typical of the mob's pattern of behavior, all too similar to the Peoria Street incident of November, 1949, which took place in a Chicago area estimated to be over 90 per cent Catholic.

Analyzed against the background of our Catholic principles and teachings, how can we interpret these actions? Whence the failure of Catholic leaders, spiritual and secular, in this and other communities, to prevent such attitudes and such outbursts of hatred among Catholic youth? True, on the Sunday following the dis-

turbances, some of the pastors in the Cicero area, as well as a few in Chicago, did speak out from the pulpit in varying degrees of denunciation. This was all to the good but, unfortunately, compared with those who did not, they were all too few and, of course, too late. Denunciations after the event will not solve these problems.

There is a failure here, a shameful, glaring failure, that lies at the doors of the Catholic churches and schools in Cicero and Berwyn and, for that matter, in the entire Chicago area. It is no answer for priests and pastors to assert that "outsiders" were the principal culprits in the mob action. Enough Cicero and Berwyn youths were among the 117 arrested during the affair, not to speak of those who were not arrested, to make such a defense completely inadequate. And the answer that one pastor in the area gave a visitor—that the people of Cicero were only "defending" their homes—is, of course, a degrading mockery of Catholic principles of justice and decency.

To assert, as a defense, that Communists started or agitated the Cicero

violence is to provide a double-barrelled commentary on the witlessness of anyone making such a statement. In the first place there is no evidence that such is the case. No outsiders were present on Tuesday, the day the Clarks moved their furniture in. By "outsiders" I mean young hoodlums who are invariably attracted to such incidents like vultures to carrion, or, in the later stages when newspapers are front-paging the incident, thrill-happy, if innocent, curiosity-seekers. Not until late Wednesday night did these outside elements appear.

One of the factors stimulating the rumors about Communists was a report that three University of Chicago students had been arrested carrying lead pipes. It developed later that two of the three, actually U. of C. students, had in fact been arrested but quickly released when no act of violence could be proven against them and they had satisfied police they were merely curiosity-seekers. The third is still under charges at this writing, but University officials state that there is no record of him as a student there.

In the second place, let us assume that Communist agitators, disguised as hoodlums, actually did incite violence. Again, there is no direct evidence for this and it would be an extremely difficult thing to prove, however capable Communists may be of such actions. But assuming such to be the case, it is rather a pointed comment on the efficacy of Catholic teaching in that community. That Catholic youths could be so blinded by racial hatred and bigotry as to allow themselves to be provoked into vandalism by agitators, Communist or not, is a matter that needs no further elaboration.

There is, however, a Communist issue in the Cicero case. It comes under the phrase "aid and comfort to the



enemy." We could not have handed the Kremlin and *Pravda* a more perfect propaganda weapon if the Politburo itself had arranged the whole affair. The Soviets will see to it that the world hears about Cicero.

And even without Soviet help the world has heard about Cicero. *Time* for August 13 reports that on his arrival in Singapore during his Pacific tour Gov. Thomas E. Dewey of New York was surprised and chagrined to find that the Singapore *Straits-Times* carried the Cicero story on its front page under a banner headline and with a four-column picture.

There is probably little or nothing that can be said in defense of this failure of the Catholic institutions of the community. Somewhere at its roots are the anti-Negro attitudes of Catholic teachers and priests, stamping such attitudes with social approval and condoning the hateful actions that inevitably flow from them in a riot situation. Or, if the teachers and priests are free from racist bigotry or refrain from voicing it, there is little in the way of a positive program of good human relations which counteracts prejudices that youth may pick up. Race, like syphilis some years back, seems to be something you just don't talk about.

A more significant factor, however, may be the failure to apply Catholic dogma and principles directly to this one social problem of our time as they have been courageously and effectively applied in labor relations. Too often the school and church, unmindful of their responsibility to lead and shape community moral attitudes, not only allow the community to channel bigotry into anti-social avenues but stand idly by while this is being done, or follow meekly down the same avenues. Instead of being vigorously and courageously discussed in the light of Catholic interracial principles by priests and teachers from the pulpit and in the classroom, the issue is hushed and forgotten until a Cicero breaks out as a monster on our hands.

The lesson of these failures is obvious. Until Catholic leaders, clerical and lay, cleanse themselves of either bigoted attitudes or timidity in the face of this challenge to our most cherished principles, nothing can be done. Courage is badly needed and, unless it is forthcoming, another battle will be lost to materialism and injustice.

Much more is needed, naturally. Courses in our schools in human relations and group relations would teach our youth the elements of social living. The January 28, 1950 report, "The Work of the Catholic Church among the Negroes of the United States," issued in Rome by the Fides Information Service of the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith contains much that is informative and useful.

Especially is adult education needed in the techniques of community living and community organization. Proper community organization prevents the occurrence of outbreaks like that in Cicero by attacking and removing their causes. In these days, when information and help on community organization are readily forthcoming from reputable intergroup and interracial agencies, there is little excuse for drifting along until violence breaks out again.

Farmers talk it over with trade unionists

George M. Barmann

ORGANIZED farm and labor groups in Ohio are meeting together in an unprecedented attempt to tackle what appears to be a herculean job: to find a basis for mutual understanding and cooperation.

The movement to ease farm and factory tensions is a project of the Ohio CIO Council. It is beginning by way of a series of meetings between farm organization and union members in each county where both agriculture and industry are economically important. Ohio is usually thought of as one of the three or four top industrial States. Significantly, it also ranks ninth in agricultural importance. If labor and agriculture are at odds, this is a natural battleground for their verbal clashes; and if they are ever to act as the partners they in fact are, this is a logical place to begin.

The CIO's soft-spoken State education director, Orville C. Jones, who spent nineteen years in the Congressional ministry, is leading the move to create interest in "developing a simple means of communication" between the two groups. "We are not aiming at big, mass meetings," Mr. Jones explains. "We are simply trying to set up a means for the exchange of ideas. There is no intention on our part to organize farmers. Heaven knows, we have trouble enough as it is."

So far the discussions have been nothing more than a means for officials of farm agencies and organizations and leaders of labor groups to come together to air their gripes. Each group believes it is misunderstood and each sees in the novel project a chance to tell its "side of the story." On the labor side, it is not a CIO show: the machinists, members of the railroad brotherhoods and representatives of the AFL are also invited to participate. The CIO generally follows the policy of requesting the Farm Bureau to take the initiative in rounding up farmers for the first meeting.

Although the problem of trying to understand the other fellow's viewpoint is probably not being approached in a way which might be called generous—each group has its own interest foremost in mind—the meetings cannot but create a situation in which there is a chance to broaden horizons and alter concepts both of agricultural and industrial workers.

Ohio factory workers, probably more aware than farmers of the size of the groceryman's "take" from the weekly take-home pay, seem to have a facility for dumping the responsibility for the high cost of living into the laps of their country cousins. They have read of lush subsidies to potato producers in Aroostook

Mr. Barmann, a graduate of Xavier University, Cincinnati, is a farm reporter for the Springfield, Ohio, Sun.

County, Maine. They have scanned reports that prices farmers are receiving for lambs or beef are at near-record highs. They have observed that Ohio farm organizations have been pretty much in agreement in favor of some kind of "floors" under the prices of agricultural products, and have at the same time opposed any sort of "ceilings" or controls. So they reason that farmers are out to "get rich" at their expense.

Generalizations come easy to farmers, too. They have reasoned that union members who report "sick" to further their demands show a flippant disregard not simply for the lawful authority of democratic government but even for the welfare of our fighting men in Korea. It is "those strikers," the agricultural workers insist, who ought to be sent to the foxholes. Moreover, according to the farmers, members of organized labor, through their constant agitation and turmoil, have forced wages up, and with wages have risen the costs of farm machinery and equipment. The result: agricultural production expenses, seldom considered by the urban dweller, are higher today than ever before.

Farmers have found it easy to pin the major share of responsibility for inflation on "another round of wage increases," which in turn has caused both scarcities and higher prices. They have considered it strange that the principle of farm parity, intended to give the agricultural community a purchasing power tied to general economic conditions, should be the target of some of those who favor escalator clauses in labor contracts.

Workers may eye "swollen corporation profits" and farmers may cast critical glances toward whoever is responsible for the "big spread" of prices between farm and grocery counter. But the farmer who calls on industry to absorb a share of rising production costs is hard to find, and workers who insist, in the name of economy, that dressed chicken need not be neatly encased in plastic are apparently not numerous or vociferous enough to worry processors.

It was news, then, when Mr. Jones and an official of a big farm organization recently agreed before a State-wide audience of rural people that processors and retailers needed to cut "extravagances" from the marketing system and that controls on commodity speculation should be tightened.

In conducting farm-labor sessions, Mr. Jones has wisely suggested that the same simple techniques be adopted that are used by the more than 1,500 Advisory Councils of the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation. The council system, which started in Ohio and still is without a counterpart in other Midwestern States, is an admirable example of "grass-roots" democracy. Each council is composed of neighboring farm families who freely discuss public affairs in an informal atmosphere. There are no programs featuring guest speakers. Everyone is expected to "speak his own piece," and usually does. The same neighborliness and informality is encouraged in the farm-labor meetings.

A farm-labor conference in one Ohio county last autumn was devoted to a casual cross-examination of political candidates. In view of the traditional political

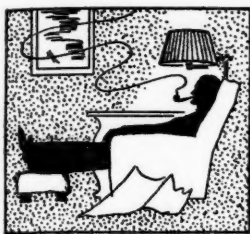
alignments of farmers and union members in the State, this was probably a premature development in the attempt to foster harmony between the two groups. It would be a brave and artful politician who would consent to submit his views to such a meeting. A forthright stand which might attract the workers might at the same time alienate the farmers—and vice versa.

The man who produces food and fiber believes he is getting a "bad press." Farmers have insisted in the combined meetings of agriculture and labor that writers who staff the nation's big dailies, news magazines and journals of opinion aren't closely associated with the rural scene and haven't shown much inclination toward learning the farm viewpoint. As a result of this situation, according to G. Maurice Wieting, director of information for the Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, farmers of the State have become "extremely sensitive" to the frequently implied charge they are unduly profiting at the expense of city consumers.

At least this generalization has some validity: the average Ohio farmer is not as prosperous as city folks assume. Average net income per Ohio farm last year, on the word of Mervin G. Smith, an Ohio State University economist, was approximately \$2,000. It is expected to rise from ten to fifteen per cent this year. Mr. Smith's figure, often stressed by farm leaders, could be misleading in that it does not reflect the value of home-produced-and-consumed foods (about \$450 per annum). Nor does it take into account, in the case of a farm tenant, various types of rental agreements which would make his economic status appear more favorable. But even with these allowances, the income figure at least suggests that the operator of the family-size farm is not becoming fabulously wealthy. Admittedly, it is difficult to determine who is an "average" farmer. He is midway between the operator of small acreage who finds it necessary to supplement his farm revenue with income from off-the-farm work, and the owner of the big, factory-type farm, who is generally an absentee and seldom a farmer. (Perhaps it is the latter-type "farmer," unfortunately on the increase in Ohio, who merits the attention of critics.)

Perhaps the exchange of ideas at farm-labor meetings will be a check on the sweeping criticisms in which both groups have indulged. Success of the informal "get-togethers" may even be the harbinger of eventual harmony. It is not uncommon in Ohio to meet a farmer who not merely challenges the wisdom of a specific strike but attacks the very principle of striking as an unjustifiable means of winning labor gains. "If I'm not satisfied with my pay or boss," he sometimes paraphrases his philosophy, "I look for a new place to work." Too few rural folks are shocked at such naïveté. Recently in one Ohio city there was a long strike which caused losses in pay which the workers can never hope to regain. It came as a surprise, then, when a farmer known for his conservatism observed: "Maybe those fellows are thinking of their children, as we think of farm improvements today as helping our children tomorrow." He had just attended a farm-labor meeting.

FEATURE "X"



AMERICA is not in most public libraries because it is not in the Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature. It is not in the Readers' Guide because it is not in most public libraries. AMERICA's Literary Editor here examines this viciously circular state of affairs.

THE *Catholic Library World* for May contains a long, detailed article on "The Catholic Periodical Index." The latter, by indexing all the material appearing in 76 Catholic periodicals, is an invaluable aid to librarians, researchers, writers, readers and others. A committee of the Catholic Library Association has been studying ways and means of improving the Index. The article itself is largely technical, as the committee was trying to determine costs of improved indexing methods. Among other factors, this study involved determining the number of separate items that have to be typed out and tabulated in each of the magazines indexed.

Of Catholic weekly magazines indexed in Vol. XIII of the C.P.I., AMERICA led the field with 2,401 items. Second was *Ave Maria*, with 1,715; third, the *Tablet* (London), 1,406; fourth, the *Commonweal*, 579. The *Catholic Mind* had 392 items in its twelve issues.

A second chart in the article lists the number of institutions subscribing to the various periodicals. The institutions are universities and colleges, high schools, seminaries and "others." AMERICA is taken by a top total of 680 (248 universities and colleges, 311 high schools, 58 seminaries and 63 others). There follow the *Catholic Library World*, 649 (213;362;32;42, in the above categories, respectively), the *Catholic Digest*, 640 (225;315;47;53), *Sign*, 595 (197;277;82;39), the *Catholic World*, 566 (240;230;47;49). The *Catholic Mind* is taken by 450 institutions.

This is a modestly good showing for both AMERICA and the *Catholic Mind*, we believe, and we are happy and grateful. We cannot feel complacent, however. There are in the United States 4,708 Catholic institutions, if, in addition to universities and colleges, high schools and seminaries, we include general and special hospitals, schools for nurses, protective institutions and homes for the aged. In other words, AMERICA could still be in about 4,000 more Catholic institutions.

The real point, however, is that AMERICA is but little known in American public libraries, where, according to Luther H. Evans, Librarian of Congress (*Saturday Review of Literature*, 7/7) free access to information ought to be readily available to anyone. Despite the further fact that AMERICA's coverage of the news leads that of any other Catholic weekly periodical, AMERICA is taken by only a handful of our 7,500 public libraries.

Why? One prime reason is that AMERICA is not indexed in the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*, published by the H. H. Wilson Company. It obviously would be incongruous for a library to have the *Readers' Guide* and not have the magazines of general interest that are indexed in it, so most large libraries subscribe to the magazines indexed in the *Guide*. Since AMERICA is not indexed in the *Guide*, it is not in the libraries.

We have called this to the attention of the Wilson Company on many an occasion. After a few responses to the effect that AMERICA is a "religious" periodical and therefore not indexed, the constant excuse has been that not enough librarians ask to have AMERICA indexed. "We are editing the *Guide*," says the Wilson Company in effect, "only to service librarians and readers; if enough readers ask librarians for your magazine, librarians will ask us. We will index any magazine that is in large demand."

There we stick and have stuck for a long time. It seems incredible that all those who want to look up something in AMERICA should have access to the *Catholic Periodical Index* or to one of the 680 Catholic institutions that take it. Do they ever think of asking for AMERICA in their local public library? Do librarians ever think of asking why it is not indexed in the *Readers' Guide*? We frankly wish we knew the answer, for it is important to us in two ways.

The first is for circulation purposes, for if all public libraries took AMERICA it would mean an increase of about 7,000 subscribers. The second reason why a more satisfactory explanation of our absence from the *Readers' Guide* is important is that we believe (or we would not be in the business) that AMERICA belongs in American public libraries, if they are to be, as is claimed for them, "ramparts of freedom." It ought to be there so people can consult it, whether they agree or disagree, wholly or in part, with what we publish every week.

What we cannot understand is that the *Readers' Guide* indexes other Catholic periodicals, but refuses to index AMERICA, which leads all periodicals in the *Catholic Periodical Index* in number of references and is subscribed to by more Catholic institutions than any other Catholic periodical. Perhaps the Catholic Library Association might be good enough to interest itself in our problem, since many of its member-libraries subscribe to the Wilson index as well as to the *Catholic Periodical Index*. We would naturally prefer, of course, that the American Library Association itself, as an exponent of free access to information, would look into what seems to us a very odd, and even discriminatory, decision of the H. H. Wilson Company.

This is the fact we would like to call respectfully to the attention of the American Library Association and of the H. H. Wilson Company. We think that the ALA might with justice call to the attention of the company the fact that a national Catholic weekly review which covers 2,401 items of general interest in one year and is used by 680 institutions has already proved that it has a socially important role to play in the public library.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

"Impressions of A Dublin Playgoer"

Stephen P. Ryan

In 1903 the players of the Irish National Dramatic company took their repertoire to London. The freshness and originality of the acting and the beauty of the plays themselves won acclaim from critics and audiences alike. More important, however, was the fact that the struggling company won for itself an "angel" in the person of Miss A. E. F. Horniman, who promised to secure a permanent home for it in Dublin. The lady was as good as her word. She purchased for the use of the Irish players an old building in Dublin on the corner of Marlborough and Lower Abbey streets just off the northern quays. The building had been, years before, the Mechanics' Theatre but had fallen upon evil days and its last use prior to Miss Horniman's purchase was as the city morgue. It seemed ideal for reconversion to its former use as a theatre, and an architect was secured to draw up the necessary plans.

The man chosen for the work was a Dubliner named Joseph Holloway, architect and, what was of equal importance, an amateur enthusiast of the drama. He proceeded with the work, and the Abbey Theatre building was the result. At least one person was quite evidently pleased with the structure and with the drama presented on its stage, and that man was Holloway himself. The Abbey opened its doors to the public for the first time in December, 1904, and a short time later, Holloway, a man of independent means, gave up architecture entirely and became what can only be described as a "professional playgoer."

No ordinary playgoer, however, was Mr. Holloway. For almost forty years he never missed a new play or a revival at the Abbey, and not infrequently attended the same play three or four evenings during a single week. The gray-haired man soon took his place as part of the Abbey Theatre legend and was as familiar a sight in the stalls or the lobby as Yeats, Lady Gregory, Lennox Robinson or the other "regulars" who frequented the place.

Holloway, who died in 1944, was an authentic representative of the long line of Dublin "characters" who have done so much to give that city color and flavor. He was in the tradition of the blind ballad singer "Zozimus," of Toucher Doyle, of The Bird Flanigan, of Jim Larkin, of the Countess Markiewicz. Shabby in dress, fiercely Catholic, a proponent of stage censorship, Holloway possessed the razor-sharp wit of the true Dubliner and a highly developed sense of the theatre, together with a genuine flair for dramatic criticism. Dubliners still quote his three-word review of a Lennox Robinson comedy. A friend met Holloway in the Abbey lobby after the final curtain and questioned him as to

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his reactions. "Bright" was the immediate reply; then there was a short pause, "and light." George Jean Nathan or Brooks Atkinson could hardly improve on that in a full column.

We must add to all this an insatiable curiosity about the stage. Like some twentieth-century Pepys, Holloway listened in on conversations during intermissions; ran after critics and friends at the close of the play to get their reactions; attended dress rehearsals; read all the dramatic criticism in the daily press and in periodicals of all kinds; and went out of his way to talk with actors and playwrights. He had a genuinely Celtic love of small talk and a receptive ear for backstage rumor and scandal. When not in attendance at the Abbey, he visited Dublin's other professional theatres: the Gaiety, the Olympia, the Queen's or the Gate. When there was a complete dearth of professional drama, he would be found at school or college plays or at parish entertainments. This inveterate theatregoer also found time to maintain a full and regular correspondence with friends all over Ireland, in Great Britain and in the United States.

After Holloway's death, his will revealed an unusual bequest to the National Library of Ireland in Dublin. The first item was a complete collection of theatre programs accumulated over more than half a century, and the second was a collection of manuscript material covering his theatrical memoirs written between the years 1895-1944. Estimated to contain more than fifty million words in the author's crabbed script, the manuscript contains, in addition to the memoirs, copies of all his letters. Here, then, in an unpublished state, is what must be the most complete record ever written of the fortunes, the trials and the triumphs of the Irish stage in the twentieth century.

Throughout the manuscript, which the author himself entitled *Impressions of a Dublin Playgoer*, are the first-hand evidences of the amazing rise, development and decline of that most spectacular manifestation of a spectacular literary movement—the Irish theatre. Alternately prejudiced and tolerant, Holloway is always human and succeeds in making even his most violent prejudices understandable. Certain rather obvious personal dislikes betray themselves in these pages: contempt for Yeats and Lennox Robinson, genuine dislike of Oliver St. John Gogarty and Liam O'Flaherty, grudging admiration of Lady Gregory and (after initial lik-

ing) anger at the realism and outspoken frankness of Seán O'Casey.

Among the more interesting sections of the *Impressions* must certainly be included those which extend from O'Casey's first appearance in the Abbey in 1923 down to his final break with it in 1928 as a result of the rejection of *The Silver Tassie*. Here, for example, we have Holloway's description of the first night's performance of O'Casey's first Abbey play, *The Shadow of a Gunman*. The date is April 13, 1923.

... slipped into the first seat in the stalls just as *The Shadow of a Gunman* was beginning. The scene was a room in a tenement in Dublin during the period of May, 1920, and it proved a biting sarcastic study of many types of characters during that stormy period in our history. The characters are very real, from the philosophizing pedlar, Seumas Shields—admirably played by F. J. McCormick—to the boasting coal porter, Tommy Owens . . . O'Casey seems to be more interested in the presentation of character than in the construction of a well-knit play, but what *The Gunman* lacked in dramatic construction, it certainly pulled up in telling dialogue of the most topical and biting kind. Out of the crudeness of the first acted play by the author, truth and human nature leaped.

Holloway went a second time the same week to see *The Shadow of a Gunman*, and on this occasion he had a chance to talk the play over with his friends. His conversations quite evidently helped him in moderating his initial enthusiasms. One of the friends with whom he spoke found it "not a play at all, just a set of characters grouped together." Another, the well-known critic, Henderson, when asked his opinion, merely shook his head and passed on out of the theatre. Holloway then comes to the conclusion that he did not like *The Gunman* nearly so well as he had on first hearing and remarks: "I now see how crude and weak the play really is."

On the night of March 3, 1924, O'Casey scored a notable triumph with the first performance of his great tragi-comedy of the Dublin slums, *Juno and the Paycock*. Two days later, Holloway is writing to his friend H. M. Walbrook, the drama critic of the London *Daily Telegraph*:

You will be pleased to hear that despite the terribly unsettled condition of the country, the little Abbey continues to flourish, and that not later than Monday last was given there for the first time a three-act tragedy of the Dublin tenements entitled *Juno and the Paycock* by a new writer—who is himself a tenement dweller—with instant success—last night the Theatre was crowded out to see the piece.

Seán O'Casey—the name of the writer—is a genius in his way—a workman with a great gift of character and an abnormal sense of the dramatic. His first play drew all Dublin and has since been revived with great success.

Writing in his own *Diary* on the same day as the above letter was penned, Holloway commented that "*Juno* is extremely realistic and a true picture of the terrible times we have and indeed are going through; and as the audience watches the mimic scene, the illusion of

reality creeps in on them in an uncanny way." He found, too, that Jack Boyle and Joxer Daly were "as precious a pair of idlers as ever were exhibited on any stage," and that "O'Casey's slum is a real article slum . . . every phrase of his characters is familiar to those who have had dealings with it [Dublin slum talk]."

Early in 1926 Holloway began to receive disquieting reports about a new O'Casey play. Rumors began drifting out from backstage that some of the women in the cast were refusing to speak certain of the author's lines; and meetings of the Board of Directors had been called to consider the possibility of expurgating some of the dialog. The play in question was, of course, *The Plough and the Stars*, O'Casey's dramatic treatment of the events of Easter Week, 1916. The third night of the opening week was marked by riots in the Abbey Theatre reminiscent of those which had taken place eighteen years before during the initial performance of Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*. The objections to the O'Casey work were grounded in two seemingly separate but actually interlocking Irish traditions: extreme nationalism and a strong moral sense. The nationalists who sparked the riots objected to *The Plough and the Stars* on the grounds that O'Casey had gratuitously insulted the memory of the heroes of 1916. The moralists objected to the introduction of a prostitute into the play's second act. Holloway was terribly concerned about the whole affair; it all tended to substantiate certain suspicions he had entertained for some time. He was not too much concerned with the nationalist viewpoint, but his essentially Irish puritanism was outraged. Referring to Rosie Redmond the prostitute in the play, he wrote caustically:

The street outside the Abbey was packed on either side with motor cars. In Abbey Street a policeman was running after some "Rosie Redmond" who flew before him. I am sure the dispersing audience found no interest in her flight (or plight) although they had applauded Rosie plying her trade in Act II of *The Plough and the Stars*. The fight between the two women in the pub scene was loudly applauded; yet who is not disgusted with such a scene or rather such an exhibition when one chances on it in real life.

Holloway may have disliked the play and the author but he certainly did not object to the air of tension surrounding the Abbey Theatre, and his sense of curiosity brought him to each of the first three performances of *The Plough and the Stars*. There were no untoward incidents on the opening night, but on the second night, he was able to report, "a sort of moaning sound could be heard from the pit during the Rosie Redmond episodes and when the Volunteers brought in flags into the pub." On the third night he really got his money's worth, for that was the night of the protest. "The great protest was made tonight and ended with almost all the second act being played in dumb show and pantomime. People spoke from all parts of the house and W. B. Yeats moved out from the stalls during the noise." Holloway then makes a sarcastic reference to Yeats' reason for leaving the theatre—to try to have the reports

of the row doctored by the newspapers. He then reports, "On his [Yeats] return to the Theatre, he tried to get a hearing from the stage, but not a word he spoke could be heard." Holloway then concludes his remarks, "Alas! tonight's protest has made a second *Playboy of The Plough and the Stars*, and Yeats is in his element at last."

In 1928, the Abbey directorate rejected Seán O'Casey's play *The Silver Tassie*. There had been bad blood for some years between playwright and theatre; and this marked the complete break in relations. After a long and acrimonious exchange of letters with the directors, O'Casey announced his intention to reside permanently in England and to write exclusively for the London stage. Holloway was not altogether displeased with this turn of events, and he writes with evident relish the following entry for June 3, 1928:

Peter Judge [the famous Abbey actor F. J. McCormick] came in when Lawrence was here and he got to talking about Casey [*sic*] and his downfall through swelled-headedness when he went to London. Judge remembered him well when he slouched into rehearsals of the *Gunman* and nobody minded him, and he took him in hand and went out and lunched with him, and often had tea with him at his digs. The incident of the raid in *The Gunman* took place at his house and he destroyed a wonderful book of jottings he had made,

day by day, of those he had worked with or met, and their sayings, because it contained such names as Griffith, DeValera, Connolly, etc. Such a book would be invaluable today. Judge said: "He [O'Casey] has a wonderful memory and dearly loves the people he writes about. He is a recorder, though, not a creator . . . His play *The Silver Tassie* was turned down because it was a poor one and for no other reason. He left the gold-mine of Dublin life and character when he fled to London and now he is finding out. In a couple of years O'Casey will be done for and he will have only himself to blame for his eclipse."

Despite his obvious delight at O'Casey's departure from the Irish scene, Holloway must have realized that with the worker-playwright's leaving, much of that color in which he so reveled was gone forever from the Abbey. The years from 1928 down to 1944, when the *Impressions* ended, were dull indeed and the pages of Holloway could not but reflect that dullness.

By a strange coincidence, as these concluding lines were being typed, a newsflash brought word of the tragic burning of the Abbey Theatre. The little building which Holloway designed and which he loved with every fibre of his being is no more. That it had long ceased to be adequate as a theatre is unimportant, for a great monument of the world's historical history is gone from us.

If this be scholarship . . .

DEMOCRACY AND THE CHURCHES

By James Hastings Nichols. Westminster. 284p. \$4.50

"A competent historian," says the Foreword, was selected "to prepare a book on the attitudes of the various communions toward democracy." Dr. Nichols is, apparently, the "competent historian"; *Democracy and the Churches* is the book. But there are three hitches: historical accuracy is shamefully lacking; "various communions" are not studied—the book is eighty per cent a treatment of the Catholic Church; that treatment is ninety per cent attack, not objective study.

A sample of the "accurate" historical "documentation": in the "suggested readings" on the topic of "the political influence of the Roman Church in Britain and America between wars," Dr. Nichols gives four sources for the United States: E. Boyd Barret's *Rome Stoops to Conquer*; George Seldes *The Catholic Crisis*; Paul Blanshard's *American Freedom and Catholic Power* and George La Piana's *A Totalitarian Church in a Democratic State*. As well might an "objective" study of Jewry be provided by referring a reader to what Hitler, Himmler, Goebbels and Goering said about the Jews.

That the book is not an impartial study of all communions is proved simply by a glance at the index.

The objectivity of treatment accorded to the Catholic Church may be gauged by such gratuitous and undocumented statements as "The Vatican, of course, has never concealed its desire to change the American Constitution [with regard to the separation of Church and State—which is nowhere defined in the book] to a regime of Roman privilege and official intolerance" (p. 247). Or again: "The Catholic citizen, like the Soviet citizen, is expected to acclaim a party line" (p. 140).

Most glaringly offensive are the author's ill-mannered and ignorant remarks about sacramental confession.

The chief political device that is unique to the Roman Church is, of course, the confessional. . . . In a Catholic country confession spoils all its machinery, for it destroys the independence of electors, of representatives, of functionaries and of the sovereign. . . . in a Catholic country there is no such thing as a secret ballot (p. 147).

How one who has never heard a confession, never made a confession and is obviously ignorant of the moral and pastoral theology of the sacrament can pontificate so insultingly about it is only less amazing than the fact that all this passes for scholarship.

BOOKS

One final thought I cannot shake off: unless *responsible* Protestant scholars will take the trouble carefully to examine such a work as *Democracy and the Churches* and be willing to recognize it for the perversion of Catholicism and American history that it is, the result must ultimately be worse for Protestantism than for Catholicism.

J. M. O'NEILL

For youth at heart

MOONFLEET

By J. Meade Falkner. Little, Brown. 247p. \$3

A book that goes on selling 10,000 copies a year for fifty years, and without the galvanization of sales campaigns, would certainly seem to be nudging into that sacred circle of books we call classics. When, in addition, it is a book of derring-do originally written for youngsters, it would seem to be one of those classics that are somewhat coyly referred to as being "for the young of all ages."

That's what *Moonfleet* is. The author was a prominent English businessman whose admiration of youthful adventure evidently engaged more of his

leisure time than did his devotion to iron-making. He was also a great admirer of Robert Louis Stevenson. So it is little wonder that English school-boys—and their elders—gobbled up *Moonfleet* a half-century ago and continue to find their appetite unsatiated. It remains to be seen whether this first American edition will equally attract the young of all ages in an age weaned on bloodier violence, spookier spooks and more cosmic adventure than Stevenson or Falkner could possibly have conceived.

Moonfleet is, in one sense, the standard adventure story. It has all the ingredients—smugglers; a lost diamond supposedly guarded by a Bluebeard; the orphan boy drawn into the intrigue; adoption by a heart-of-gold contrabander; the lovely daughter of the villain of the piece waiting to wed the now rich young adventurer. What it has in addition is a smooth and mounting tense style of very credible eighteenth-century flavor; an intimate share-the-adventure tone achieved through the successful first-person narrative; and a simple human wholesomeness that is glaringly absent in the more fantastic adventure tales spawned in a scientific age. It is old-fashioned in its frank sentiment, its pointing of a moral.

But it is not, I regret to proclaim, Stevenson—or is that to say that those who have read RLS when young refuse stubbornly to own any allegiance to a come-lately rival? Falkner hasn't RLS's witchery with either character or situation. Hero John Trenchard is a touch too priggish to be another Jim Hawkins; Squire Maskew is not the double-dyed scoundrel that was Long John Silver. Nevertheless, those of us who still feel the shiver along the spine when we read *Treasure Island*, *Kidnapped* or *The Master of Ballantrae* will be grateful to Mr. Falkner for recapturing a whiff of the old magic and perhaps for sending us back to some fresh hours with the old master.

I'd like to mention another book which, in my opinion, tops *Moonfleet*. It didn't get the fanfare that greeted Falkner's tale, perhaps for the reason that it hasn't the interesting background. It was *City of Frozen Fire*, by V. Wilkins (Macmillan, \$3). For one thing, it is more exotic—faraway lands and strange peoples feature in the story, which recounts how the prince of a tribe that had fled from Wales centuries ago leads an intrepid youngster to the island where the tribe had settled, there to liberate them from the pirates who had invaded the peaceful kingdom. It has everything, including some neat use of Latin, the only language in which conversation can be carried on for a time.

Well now, don't accuse me of lowering standards by devoting our

crowded book columns to juveniles. I for one read *Treasure Island* every year for some twenty, I suppose, and well after I was twenty. I believe—or hope, at any rate—that I am the better for it. Perhaps you will be for *Moonfleet* and *City of Frozen Fire*.

HAROLD C. GARDINER

Pattern of Soviet "liberation"

TOTAL TERROR: An Expose of Genocide in the Baltics

By Albert Kalme. Appleton-Century-Crofts. 310p. \$3.50

This book bares the gruesome events of 1940-1951 in the Baltic States. At times the reader may well wonder whether he should not have taken more literally the warning printed on page 10: "If you have the stomach for it, read on!"

The Baltic Republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia provided the "laboratory" for later Soviet experiments, on a larger scale, in subjugated countries. Recent dispatches from the Korean front regarding the mass murders of captive American soldiers, and reports of mass deportations from Hungary, were foreshadowed in the events so brutally portrayed in Kalme's *Total Terror*.

The infamous "Serov Order" in-

structing the NKVD personnel on the manner of conducting mass deportations from Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania is reproduced, together with several orders of Serov's pupil, Gladkov. The "Operations" were to be carried through "without noise or panic." Children were to be separated from their parents. No one was to be forewarned. When documents such as these (whose originals are in the possession of the Lithuanian American Information Center in New York) are read, the reader will no longer wonder about the Mindszenty and other trials and their "confessions."

Much of the story is known to American Catholic readers. Much is not. One can profit by reading the book—the entire book—in installments, allowing time for the information to sink in. Its publication by a large publishing company signalizes, in effect, an end to the "conspiracy of silence" about which Balts and Lithuanian-Americans have complained for years.

The book, edited by Walter Arm, impresses one as a sincere attempt to tell the story of all three Baltic peoples and to include materials concerning each. Naturally enough, being a Latvian, the author places more emphasis on events and personalities of Latvia. The Lithuanian Insurrection of June, 1941 is hardly touched upon, even

THE CORPORATIVE STATE

By Joaquin Azpiazu, S.J.

Translated by William Bresnahan, O.S.B.

\$4.00

The learned Jesuit, author of this work, is regarded in Europe as a most reliable authority on the subject of the corporative regime.

Most American readers are not aware of the extent to which corporative forms of economic and social life have developed in several European countries. In view of the likelihood that we are destined willy-nilly to take a hand in European affairs, we shall do well to become acquainted with this organization of society.

The fact that corporativism has in some countries become associated with dictatorship is misleading regarding the

nature of a corporative regime, which does not include governmental absolutism in its program. With us, the period of ruthless capitalism has been followed by the towering might of organized labor and increased tension between employers and workers. Mutual understanding and cooperation, the calculated fruit of corporativism, seems to be the only sound remedy for the growing tension, as it is also the remedy advocated by successive popes. Let us at least familiarize ourselves with its workings and then adopt from it those elements congenial to our temperament and traditions.

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though similar attempts in Latvia and Estonia were by no means comparable in size or content to the events in Lithuania. Lacking the experience of mass uprising in his own country, the author gives more importance than is necessary to the alleged attempt at restoration of independence in 1944 or 1945 in Latvia and Estonia.

There is carelessness in naming personalities. For instance, on p. 91 the author names two Latvian Cabinet Ministers "who lost their lives in concentration camps in Germany," when as a matter of fact, both are alive and one was in frequent contact with the reviewer about the time the book was ready for publication.

The author has scrupulously compiled and evaluated statistical and other data, especially in citing the testimony of persons who survived the ordeal. He is not as careful in giving proper credit to persons and institutions which provided some of the materials. For example, the author incorporates as his own ("I, who suffered under both, say. . .") observations regarding the comparison of the Nazi and Soviet systems made by a prominent non-Latvian personality intimately associated with the underground resistance.

The discriminating reader will find ample material on the various phases of Sovietization, whether he is concerned with Catholic, Protestant or other religious or Church organizations, the educational system, the economic system, cultural life, state administration, political parties, the armed forces, espionage, publishing activities or other phenomena of life. The book will appeal to information seekers in any field, though in general it will not appeal to the scholarly researcher who wants carefully classified data with footnotes indicating where the original materials are to be found.

CONSTANTINE R. JURGELA

From the Editor's shelf

GEOGRAPHY OF THE U.S.S.R. A REGIONAL SURVEY, by Theodore Shabad (Columbia. \$8.50). The first part of the book is a survey of the entire Soviet empire under such topics as water systems, agricultural and mineral resources, transportation, geology and population. In the second part the author reviews the country area by area, indicating the natural and man-made resources in each. It is plentifully illustrated with maps. In the opinion of Leonard J. Schweitzer, Mr. Shabad's encyclopedic work is the most accurate and detailed account of its type available in English today.

THE MONARCH OF THE GLEN, by Compton Mackenzie (Houghton Mifflin. \$4), is Ben Nevis MacDonald,

the choleric laird of Glenbogle Castle. With his purple nose and explosive certitudes he makes an ideal foil for the series of preposterous indignities the author has prepared for him. Mr. Mackenzie's *Tight Little Island* amused a lot of moviegoers, and this book betrays a scenaric touch. In any case, since the author contrives to weave into his narrative the smell of heather, the endlessness of Scottish rain and a happy love story, *Phillips Temple* believes this is a volume to reach for from your canvas chair.

JAMES M. O'NEILL teaches in the speech department at Brooklyn College and is the author of *Religion and Education Under the Constitution* and of the forthcoming *Catholicism and American Freedom*.

CONSTANTINE R. JURGELA is director of the Lithuanian-American Information Center, New York, N. Y.

THE WORD

"And he who was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother" (Luke 7:15, XV Sunday after Pentecost).

No human sorrow can stir the heart of man to greater depths of compassion than the grief of a mother who has lost her child through an untimely death. The sword of Simeon that pierced the soul of Mary when Jesus expired on the Cross, "that out of many hearts thoughts may be revealed," bears witness to this. These thoughts are sublimely expressed in the *Stabat Mater* and other liturgical hymns of the Church. The Mass of the Seven Dolours calls upon the prophet Jeremias to give his testimony with the words: "All ye who pass by the way attend and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." How many mothers in our own time have tasted this bitter cup of suffering. All over a war-stricken world young lives are offered up as victims of hate and greed. Only God knows the pain in the mother's heart. Only He can ease the sorrow of the mother who has lost her child.

With His own mother, and mothers everywhere, in mind, Jesus meets a widowed mother at the gate of the little town of Naim as she disconsolately follows the body of her only boy to the grave. St. Luke tells us that Jesus "seeing her, had compassion on her, and said to her, 'Do not weep.' Then going up to the stretcher He

touched it and said: "Young man, I say to thee arise." The miracle that followed astounded the crowd that had gathered and they said: "A great prophet has risen among us. God has visited His people."

St. Augustine preached a sermon on this gospel in which he tells us that many who witnessed the miracles of Jesus are like visitors to a library that houses rare volumes written in beautiful scripts. They admire the beauty of the writing but they can't read the language. "Others admire the workmanship and follow what they have understood. So ought we be in the school of Christ."

That St. Augustine saw the inner meaning of this miracle is clear. The Church has chosen passages from his sermon as the breviary lesson for the gospel of today. And so on this Sunday in every part of the world priests and religious will read in the Divine Office these words: "When that young man was raised from the dead, his mother, a widow, rejoiced. Every day when men are brought back to the life of the soul, Mother Church rejoices." Those who have read the *Confessions* of St. Augustine will understand how the great Doctor of the Church is here thinking of the spiritual death of his own tragic youth, of the tears and prayers of his widowed mother Monica and her ultimate joy when he was brought back to the life of the spirit. Certainly the Church had this in mind when she chose Augustine to express for her the meaning of today's gospel. For she has appointed this same gospel to be read on the feast of St. Monica on May 4 and has called upon Augustine to repeat his Mother's Day sermon in the breviary.

There is, then, something more tragic than a mother losing her beloved son to an early grave. Many a youth has completed a long course in a short time and reached a glorious goal. What more can a true mother desire than true success in life for those whom she has ushered into life? What greater hope can brighten her declining years than the thought of sharing eternal life with those who shared her temporal life?

The real tragedy is the death of the soul, often unnoticed by men but known to God and the conscience of the sinner. That is the death that spells eternal loss to a mother's love, unless Jesus, again moved with compassion and hearkening to the prayers of a mother, utters those words: "I say to thee arise." O God, grant that the grief of our mother, the Church—which is also the grief of Mary, our Mother—for the death of so many of her children may be turned into joy. Give them back to their Mother!

JOHN J. SCANLON, S.J.

THEATRE

DOMINICAN PLAYWRIGHT. I have often wondered how many readers of this column—or, for that matter, how many Catholics—know that Rev. Urban Nagle, O.P., is one of the nation's ablest playwrights. Those who must admit that they are not as familiar with Father Nagle's plays as they would like to be need not feel too embarrassed, since I am several years late in mentioning the fact. I have known that he is one of our first-string playwrights since I attended the premiere of *Lady of Fatima*, but somehow strayed off in a mental fog and forgot to report the significance of what I discovered.

Most people learn of a playwright's importance by seeing his plays. It happens that Father Nagle's plays are usually presented before small audiences in hideaway theatres. For that disservice to the part of the public with a genuine appreciation of drama, Broadway producers as a body are culpable. It is their business to discover dramatic ability, however obscure. That they have overlooked a dramatist of Father Nagle's stature is inexcusable.

That their negligence is inexcusable does not mean that the producers haven't got plenty of excuses. Their favorite excuse, the one they would probably trot out first, is that Father Nagle's plays are based on religious themes; and they must give the public what it wants. That seems plausible enough until one stops to examine it.

Drama isn't a commodity like toothpaste or socks or razor blades. Any promotion expert worth his pay can measure public preference for Zip over Zizz razor blades within an infinitesimal margin of error. But if Rodgers and Hammerstein, after writing *Oklahoma!* had authorized a Gallup poll to decide their next show, the result might have been something like *Very Good, Eddie, Student Prince, Blossom Time*, another *Oklahoma* or any other show except *Carousel*. How could the public have wanted *Othello* before Shakespeare wrote it or the *Moonlight Sonata* before Beethoven composed it?

The producers are more rational when they insist that religious themes do not appeal to contemporary theatre-goers. I say they are rational, not convincing. After all, the present generation of theatre-goers is the audience they have created, or, more accurately, selected; and they ought to know more about its tastes and IQ than I do. But their hand-picked "public" did applaud

I'd Gladly Go Back

By Arthur R. McGratty, S.J.

Illustrated by Lloyd Ostendorf

This book provides a refreshing interlude of escape from the stern reality of the present and allows us to recapture the faith and contentment of the earlier years of this century. It is a sparkling reminiscence of the childhood and adolescence of a Catholic boy written against the background of a large, somewhat madcap, typical American family. It is a healthy and different story of a family that is fundamentally decent, devoted and humorous. Vivid characterizations enable the reader to know each of its members and to share in their warm, human everyday happenings. The many rollicking incidents recalled by Father McGratty are enlivened by a buoyant sense of humor and whimsy. \$2.75

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5. **Introduction to a Devout Life**
St. Francis de Sales
Catholic Book Pub. Co.
6. **Apologia Pro Vita Sua**
Newman
Longmans, Green
7. **Reign of Jesus Through Mary**
Denis
Montfort Fathers
8. **True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**
Galliffet
Montfort Fathers
9. **Art and Scholasticism**
Maritain
Scribner's
10. **Companion to the Summa**
Farrell
Sheed & Ward

CLUB SELECTIONS FOR AUGUST

The Catholic Book Club:

Behind The Masque
Urban Nagle, O. P.
McMullen. \$3.50

The Spiritual Book Associates:

The Sacred Heart Yesterday and Today
Rev. Arthur McGratty, S.J.
Benziger. \$3.50

The Catholic Children's Book Club:

PICTURE BOOK GROUP:
Cow Concert
Earl Goodenow
Knopf. \$1.50

INTERMEDIATE GROUP:
Ginger Pye
Eleanor Estes
Harcourt, Brace. \$2.50

OLDER BOYS:
Rookie Southpaw
Burgess Leonard
Lippincott \$2.50

OLDER GIRLS:
Kay Ann
Grace & Harold Johnson
Whittlesey. \$2.50

Lincoln in Illinois and *The Magnificent Yankee*. Why are the producers so sure that *Armor of Light* would not appeal to their "public"? St. Paul was quite as important a person in building Western civilization as either Lincoln or Mr. Justice Holmes. Some old-fashioned people would say more important.

Most of Father Nagle's plays have been published, but too often in periodicals that do not have general circulation. Some of his works have been published in book form, however, and are fairly easy to find in the book shops. It is to be hoped that they are in the libraries of all Catholic colleges and high schools.

While Father Nagle's plays were not written for the library, but for the theatre, they make interesting and often delightful reading. In *Savonarola*, *Lady of Fatima* or *City of Kings* there are alternate passages of humor and singing prose. One can open the volume almost at random and come upon an arresting turn of dialog or a line with the felicity of poetry. It may be years hence before the stage acquires the maturity to present Father Nagle's plays, but they are already available to those who find diversion in armchair drama.

Incidentally, Fr. Nagle's engaging account of the work of the Blackfriars, the theatre group he was instrumental in founding, is told in his *Behind the Masque*, the current selection of the Catholic Book Club.

THEOPHILUS LEWIS

FILMS

DAVID AND BATHSHEBA. This biblical epic was no doubt inspired by the phenomenal box-office success of *Samson and Delilah*. The suspicion exists that it was also inspired by the fact that the Bible contains some very interesting sinners on a grand scale and a forth-right attitude toward sin which for screen purposes would be impossible to duplicate in a modern story. David, for example, had several wives, committed adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of one of his lieutenants, got rid of the superfluous husband by ordering him to certain death in the forefront of an attack and yet kept his throne and made the lady his queen. The illicit love affair and especially David's attempt to maneuver Uriah (Kieron Moore), who had taken a temporary vow of celibacy, back to his wife so that he would believe himself the father of Bathsheba's (Susan Hayward's) unborn child are set forth in

the movie at a length and with an emphasis on sordid detail which cannot be explained away as being required by the plot.

In addition, the picture's motivation displays an entirely unbiblical rationalism. Thus when David finally comes to pray before the Ark of the Covenant he asks, not for forgiveness, but that he may regain the lost faith of his childhood. Though Gregory Peck's dignified and sincere performance gives the character a good deal of authenticity and stature, it seems evident that the script-writer was on the side of his own invention, David the skeptic, and had stacked the cards against faith and the prophet Nathan (Raymond Massey). Its dubious moral and historical implications aside, the picture commits the cardinal sin of being deficient in the spectacle and action which its subject matter and its handsome Technicolor production demand. In the course of its largely conversational progress it mentions a lot of people and incidents which sound infinitely more interesting than anything which happens on the screen.

(20th Century-Fox)

FORCE OF ARMS was designed, even to the play on the word "arms" in the title, to be the World War II equivalent of Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*. The situation is very much the same—the love story of a combat soldier (William Holden) and a girl in uniform (Nancy Olson) against the background of war-torn Italy. What is significantly different is the attitude and the scale of values it reflects. In *A Farewell to Arms* the affair between the hero and heroine is condoned on the flaccidly romantic grounds that it is the logical escape from the horrors of war. The *Wac* in *Force Of Arms*, on the other hand, is impervious to proposals other than marriage, not so much on moral principle as because she is realistic and unsentimental enough to see how war degrades and to refuse to be a party to it.

In another striking contrast the hero of the Hemingway novel deserts his regiment at the front to help the girl he loves. In the pacifist 'twenties it seemed that he had made the right choice. But his present-day counterpart is so aware of a soldier's responsibility that he is conscience-stricken when love and a consequently increased will to survive make him renege on a suicidal chance which might have saved a comrade. For *adults* the picture is an absorbing, sometimes pungently humorous and very well acted study of love and war. It misses being first-rate because its love scenes have a stilted quality and lack the impact of its realistic battles. (Warner)

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CORRESPONDENCE

Approved

EDITOR: Charles Lucey's July 21 "Washington Front" was refreshingly frank and realistic. During the past two years very few articles critical of the Truman Administration have appeared in *AMERICA*. Where there is a two-party system there should be plenty of room for debate on the high level of constructive criticism.

WALTER A. ROEMER
Milford, Ohio

The Pope and the UN

EDITOR: In your informed, though very brief comment on the significant address of the Holy Father to the International Catholic Congress on Problems of Rural Life (7/21, p. 390), you wrote:

The Pope extended cordial greetings to UN agencies occupied with rural life problems and promised the Church's "most sympathetic collaboration."

The words actually quoted from the Pope's address are correct, but the original context reveals a broader commendation of international socio-economic effort than would be gathered by the casual reader.

The Holy Father at the conclusion of his address first commended the "agricultural organizations and agencies" which have established their headquarters in the Eternal City. Among others, the Food and Agriculture Organization, just moved to Rome, and the older International Institute of Agriculture, now absorbed into FAO, were evidently intended. The Holy Father continued:

And We are happy to assure all the agencies and offices of the United Nations destined to bring international assistance to the working man that the Church is ever prepared to support their efforts with her most sympathetic collaboration (emphasis added).

The above is pointed out in fairness to the International Labor Organization, UNESCO, the World Health Organization, and the UN secretariat, as well as the Economic and Social Council—all of which are actively engaged in programs to better the socio-economic conditions of the workingman throughout the world.

Implied also is a commendation for international effort at socio-economic betterment and for the concept of international cooperation as embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. Coming so soon after the address of

April 6, 1951 to the World Federalist congress in Rome, the above observation of the Holy Father would seem to have considerable significance.

WILLIAM J. GIBBONS, S.J.
National Catholic Rural
Life Conference
New York, N. Y.

Modern mystery plays

EDITOR: I was keenly interested in the article by Sister Julie, O.P., "Do we dare try medieval plays?" (AM. 7/21).

Chestnut Hill College, Philadelphia, has for some years included plays in the medieval mode in its dramatic program. In 1948 it presented Christopher Fry's *The Boy With a Cart*; in 1949, *I Will Arise*, by T. B. Morris; in 1950, *Joyful Mystery*, by John Louis Bonn, S.J.

The enthusiastic reception these plays received has convinced the Drama Department of their value in its program.

MIRIAM DAVENPORT GOW
Professor of Spoken English,
Chestnut Hill College
Philadelphia, Pa.

EDITOR: In June, 1949 the members of our Aquinas Classical Academy presented *Paphnutius*, by Hrosvitha, the tenth-century nun-dramatist. The audience was small but appreciative. It consisted, in addition to the students' parents, of professors and teachers from neighboring colleges and high schools.

The production was very heartening for the director, and was an overwhelming surprise for the audience. I do indeed believe that we may well "dare try medieval plays."

SISTER M. NORBERTA
Latin Department,
College of Our Lady
of Mercy
Portland, Maine

Pastor-graduate cooperation

EDITOR: One pastor in this city asked a Catholic graduate to teach in a summer Catechism school. The graduate replied: "I have neither interest in nor qualifications for teaching. However, I am good at social work, and will be glad to visit the homes and get the kids out for the classes." The pastor said: "Fine, go ahead."

This is a good example of cooperation. When the pastor and the graduate try to understand each other, a lot of teamwork can be done.

Superior, Wis. LORRAINE SHAK